

Message Text

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12

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 NIC-01 DPW-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-03

H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

NEA-09 AID-05 SR-02 ORM-01 /091 W
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O R 051131Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4805

INFO CINCPAC

USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USDEL JEC PARIS

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

UNCLAS SAIGON 4341

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, VS

SUBJECT: APRIL 5 "PRG" PRESS CONFERENCE IN SAIGON

1. "PRG" SPOKESMAN AT WEEKLY PRESS CONFERENCE FACED A BEEFED-UP WESTERN PRESS CORPS AND SQUIRMED UNDER UNUSUALLY PENETRATING QUESTIONS, PRODUCING UNUSUALLY INTERESTING, IF SOMEWHAT HEDGED, RESPONSES. PRESS PROBES WERE PRIMARILY AIMED AT POSSIBLE REPRISALS AGAINST THOSE WHO HAVE SUPPORTED GVN, COMMUNIST JUSTIFICATION OF RECENT MILITARY ADVANCES WHICH FLY IN THE FACE OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT THEY CLAIM TO SUPPORT, AND COMMUNIST INTENTIONS, PARTICULARLY TOWARD FOREIGNERS. FOLLOWING ARE EDITED VERBATIM RESPONSES.

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2. ASKED WHAT SORT OF "PUNISHMENT" IS ENVISAGED IN APRIL 1

TEN-POINT POLICY TOWARD LIBERATED AREAS: "SOLDIERS AND FUNCTIONARIES OF THE SAIGON ADMINISTRATION WILL BE PROTECTED AND HELPED IF THEY DO NOT OPPOSE AND SABOTAGE THE REVOLUTION. FOR THOSE WHO DO NOT SUPPORT OR HAVE NOT SUPPORTED THE REVOLUTION, WE SHALL PATIENTLY AWAIT THEM AND ENLIGHTEN THEM ON THE POLICIES. IT IS NOT STATED IN OUR POLICIES THAT WE SHALL PUNISH THEM. AND HOW WILL THOSE WHO OPPOSE AND SABOTAGE THE REVOLUTION BE PUNISHED? IT WILL BE ACCORDING TO THEIR GUILT AND UNDER CONSIDERATION OF THE LOCAL ADMINISTRATION. PUNISHMENT IS NOT A COMMON THING, AND IT IS ONLY FOR A VERY SMALL NUMBER WHO OPPOSE AND SABOTAGE THE REVOLUTION."

3. ASKED WHETHER THOSE IN THE "THIRD FORCE" WHO OPPOSE/A COMMUNIST TAKEOVER WOULD ALSO BE "PUNISHED". "I THINK THAT THOSE INCLUDED IN THE THIRD FORCE APPROVE OF PEACE, INDEPENDENCE, DEMOCRACY AND NATIONAL CONCORD, AND THOSE WHO OPPOSE AND SABOTAGE PEACE, INDEPENDENCE, DEMOCRACY AND NATIONAL CONCORD ARE OF COURSE NOT THE THIRD FORCE."

4. ASKED WHETHER ANY PUNISHMENT HAD ALREADY BEEN METED OUT IN THE NEWLY "LIBERATED" AREAS: "AS FAR AS I KNOW THERE HAS NOT BEEN ANY" (THE SPOKESMAN USED THE VIETNAMESE WORD "CHUA", WHICH MEANS "NOT YET").

5. ASKED WHAT THE RANGE OF POTENTIAL PUNISHMENT MIGHT BE: "I THINK THIS DEPENDS ON THE SPECIFIC SITUATION AND ON THE EXTENT THAT THEY SABOTAGE THE INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE. IT RANGES FROM DEPRIVING HIM OF HIS FREEDOM OR EVEN DEATH PENALTY IF HE OPPOSES THE INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE."

6. ASKED HOW MANY PEOPLE COMPRISE THE "THIEU CLIQUE" AND WHETHER THE DEATH PENALTY WOULD BE AUTOMATIC FOR THEM: "WE HAVE NOT BEEN INFORMED OF THE SPECIFIC NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN THE THIEU CLIQUE. BUT WE KNOW THAT THAT NUMBER IS NOT A BIG ONE. THE SVN PEOPLE AND THE MAJORITY OF MEN IN THE SAIGON ARMY AND ADMINISTRATION DESIRE PEACE, INDEPENDENCE, DEMOCRACY AND NATIONAL CONCORD. AT PRESENT THE REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT IS DEMANDING THE OVERTHROW OF THE THIEU JUNTA. BUT LATER, WHEN THE WHOLE SVN IS COMPLETELY LIBERATED, THE REVOLUTIONARY GOVT WILL BASE ITSELF ON THE SPECIFIC ATTITUDE OF THIS PERSON OR ANOTHER TO

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DETERMINE THE EXTENT OF PUNISHMENT. I DON'T KNOW SPECIFICALLY HOW THE REVOLUTIONARY ADMINISTRATION WILL TREAT MR. THIEU, BUT I THINK THAT LATER THE QUESTION OF MR. THIEU HIMSELF WILL NOT BE A MAJOR QUESTION ANY LONGER."

7. ASKED WHETHER THE "PRG" WAS INSISTING THAT THE U.S. ACTIVELY OVERTHROW THE "THIEU CLIQUE" AND, IF IT WAS NOT OVERTHROWN, WHETHER SAIGON WOULD BE ATTACKED: "IF THE U.S.

REFUSES TO ABANDON THE THIEU CLIQUE, WHICH IT IMPOSED ON SVN AND USED AS A TOOL TO CONTINUE THE WAR AND SABOTAGE THE AGREEMENT, THE SVN PEOPLE WILL CONTINUE THEIR STRUGGLE ON THREE FRONTS--POLITICAL, MILITARY AND DIPLOMATIC--TO ACHIEVE AT ALL COSTS THEIR FINAL GOAL."

8. ASKED AGAIN WHETHER HE WOULD RULE OUT A MILITARY ATTACK ON SAIGON: "WE PERSIST IN THE STRUGGLE ON THREE FRONTS. IT DEPENDS ON THE CONCRETE SITUATION. AT TIMES THIS ASPECT OR ANOTHER ASPECT IS MORE (FRUITFUL?) BUT GENERALLY SPEAKING THE STRUGGLE IS ON THREE FRONTS."

9. ASKED ABOUT THE APRIL 4 CRASH OF A C5A CARRYING ORPHANS, ITS CONNECTION WITH THE "PRG" ATTITUDE TOWARD THE INCOMING AIRLIFT OF WEAPONS, AND THE POSSIBILITY OF COMMUNIST SABOTAGE OF THE AIRCRAFT: "OF COURSE AN AIR CRASH WHICH HAS RESULTED IN THE CASUALTY OF HUNDREDS OF CHILDREN IS A HEART-RENDING CRASH. BUT I WOULD LIKE TO EMPHASIZE HERE THAT WHETHER THERE IS AN AIR CRASH OR NOT, THE U.S. ACTIVITY UNDER THE PRETEXT OF HELPING REFUGEES TO LEND A HELPING HAND TO THE THIEU JUNTA TO CARRY OUT THE PLAN OF FORCED EVACUATION OR DISPLACEMENT OF POPULATION, TO CONTINUE TO SCRAPE MANPOWER FOR A U.S. NEO-COLONIALIST WAR IN SVN--THESE ACTS ARE INCORRECT, ARE CRIMINAL, ARE ENCROACHMENTS ON THE SOVEREIGNTY OF VIET-NAM AND ARE BEING CONDEMNED BY THE PEOPLE."

10. ASKED WHETHER AMERICANS WHO VOLUNTARILY STAY BEHIND IN "LIBERATED" AREAS WOULD BE REGARDED UNDER THE APRIL 1 TEN-POINT POLICY AS FOREIGNERS HELPING THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE OR PART OF THE CULTURAL IMPERIALISM THE "PRG" HAS PROMISED TO DISMANTLE: "IF THERE ARE AMERICANS WHO DESIRE TO STAY BACK IN THE PRG-CONTROLLED AREAS, THE CASES WILL BE SOLVED AS IN MANY OTHER COUNTRIES, I.E., THE REVOLUTIONARY ADMINISTRATION WILL

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CONSIDER THE CASES AND SAY YES OR NO. AS TO WHETHER THEIR ACTIVITIES ARE USEFUL OR NOT USEFUL, THIS DEPENDS ON WHETHER THEY ARE AT THE SERVICE OF THE PRESERVATION OF THE INDEPENDENCE AND SOVEREIGNTY OF THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE, OR THEY ARE AT THE SERVICE OF THE DARK DESIGNS OF U.S. IMPERIALISM."

11. ASKED WHETHER FOREIGN PHILANTHROPIC OR RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS SHOULD STAY BEHIND IN SAIGON OR LEAVE: "MY ANSWER IN PRINCIPLE IS THAT THE REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT GUARANTEES THE LIVES AND PROPERTY OF FOREIGN RESIDENTS LIVING IN SVN AND RESPECTS FREEDOM OF WORKSHIP AND BELIEF."

12. ASKED WHICH ARTICLES OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT PERMIT MILITARY ACTION, FOR WHATEVER PURPOSE, ON THE PRESENT SCALE: "THE BASIC QUESTION IN THE PARIS AGREEMENT IS A QUESTION OF PRINCIPLE.

THAT IS, ALL COUNTRIES MUST RESPECT THE INDEPENDENCE, SOVEREIGNTY, UNITY AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF VIETNAM."

13. ASKED WHETHER THE GVN/U.S.'S ALLEGED VIOLATIONS OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT LED THE "PRG" TO CONSIDER THE AGREEMENT ABROGATED: "THE PRG HAS ALWAYS CONSIDERED THE PARIS AGREEMENT A GREAT VICTORY OF ITS OWN AND ALSO A VICTORY OF THE PEACE-AND-JUSTICE LOVING PEOPLE OF THE WORLD. THIS VICTORY CANNOT BE BLOTTED OUT BY THE U.S. AND THIEU. THIS REMAINS A VERY VALID AND PRECIOUS LEGAL FOUNDATION FOR THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE IN THEIR JUST STRUGGLE. FOR THIS REASON THE REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT IS DETERMINED TO DEFEND THIS AGREEMENT AND DEMAND THAT THE ADVERSARY DO THE SAME."

14. ASKED WHETHER THE "PRG" INTENDS TO TAKE OVER THE ENTIRE COUNTRY: "FACTS HAVE ASSURED THAT IF THE THIEU JUNTA IS NOT THROWN AWAY, THERE IS NO WAY TO THROW AWAY THE MAIN OBSTACLE TO THE SETTLEMENT OF THE SVN POLITICAL PROBLEM. SUCH A SETTLEMENT WAS PROVIDED FOR IN THE PARIS AGREEMENT. IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT SO LONG AS THE SVN PEOPLE HAVE NOT YET OBTAINED THEIR GOALS, THE PEOPLE AND ARMY OF SVN WILL PERSIST IN THEIR STRUGGLE ON THREE FRONTS--POLITICAL, MILITARY AND DIPLOMATIC."

15. ASKED WHETHER THE "PRG" PREFERRED MILITARY MEANS OR NEGOTIATIONS TO SETTLE THE VIET-NAM QUESTION: "WE HAVE STATED ON MANY OCCASIONS, AND THIS HAS ALSO BEEN PROVED, UNCLASSIFIED

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THAT WE ARE PERSISTENT IN OUR STRUGGLE ON THREE FRONTS TO GUARANTEE THE COMPLETE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT AND TO DEMAND THE COMPLETE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT BY THE OTHER SIDE. CONCRETELY SPEAKING, IT IS NOT NECESSARY THAT AN AREA IN SOUTH VIET-NAM MUST BE LIBERATED BY MILITARY MIGHT."
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS CONFERENCES, POLITICAL SITUATION, MILITARY PLANS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975SAIGON04341
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750118-0952
From: SAIGON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750478/aaaactdo.tel
Line Count: 207
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <25 JUN 2003 by SilvaL0>; APPROVED <14 JAN 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: APRIL 5 "PRG" PRESS CONFERENCE IN SAIGON
TAGS: PINS, VS, PRG
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006